



The International Fancy Guppy Association



Dedicated to Promoting The Fancy Guppy Hobby

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THE MAKINGS OF A GUPPY ADDICT

By Frank Schulerbrandt

What is it that makes us spend 40, 50 maybe 60 dollars on three little fish and walk away from the seller feeling as if we have just robbed him? What is it that causes us to drive miles upon miles just to spend two, three maybe four hours together once a month to hear some crazy guys talk about fish or to spend a weekend hosting a fish show and all of the hours in preparation leading up to the show and even after the show. There is even that possibility of you even breaking your leg or getting hurt more seriously; Even more seriously, waking up on the floor instead of the bed, perhaps even in the wrong room after a night of indulging in the festivities of the hospitality room or the bar. Sounds insane to me.

What is this madness? And when and how did it start? Can we blame this addiction on our parents? Can we blame this sick addiction on some strange guy you met at an all species tropical fish show? Tell me how I spend more time with my fish than my own wife (common complaint, sorry ladies). Will my health insurance cover this sickness without them having me fill out a thousand forms. Will I have to join to GUPPY ANONYMOUS? What's your story and how did you end up in these halls of insanity?

My story started when I was about 12-13 and unfortunately I cannot blame my parents for this lunacy. Growing up in the South Bronx, in New York City, there were many pet shops and one day I stopped in one of the local pet shops on 138th street, just a few blocks from where I lived. As my friend Eddie and I walked into the shop we gasped as to how many tanks were in this long railroad type of pet shop. There must have been 30-40 tanks on each of three levels and that was just the left side of the wall, just about the same amount on the right side as well. As Eddie and I slowly inspected each tank, unknown to me a kind of sickness was starting, no symptoms yet, or for years to come but something definitely overcame me at that point. While inspecting one of the tanks we came across some guppies. They were Red Flamingo guppies, they were beautiful. A fiery bright red with some gold in the fish as well. Then we saw some double swordtails, then some multi colored guppies and for six or seven more tanks we saw more beautiful guppies. Needless to say Eddie and I purchased guppies from whatever little money we had at the time, I don't even know which guppy strain we purchased, but we were in heaven and could not wait until we got home to kill these beautiful fish. That was not our intent but yes we did manage to kill these beautiful little creatures.

The next weekend after we got our weekly allowance, weekly school lunch money, etc. I asked Eddie if wanted to go to the pet shop with me he said no. Man oh Man was he smart when I look back at the situation now. I ventured to the local pet shop and once again purchased some more guppies. I asked the pet shop owner all kinds of question that Saturday morning. He suggested I purchase a book on guppies. The book was entitled GUPPIES by Wilfred Whiter. That weekend I had one vibrator pump and 6 one gallon jars, this was one of the tips the pet shop owner told me. I had one ten gallon tank as well. My mother said where are you going with all of that junk??? If she would have been more stern about me bringing all of those gallon jars into the house, perhaps I would not have these continuous relapses. Enough of trying to blame my mother for my present ailment. The next weekend there was another ten gallon tank and more hassles from my MOM.

It was a time where I needed to find people who also worshiped the mighty guppy. I did not even consider this a sickness. I guess denial is the first sign of a sickness, man was I sick... my friends started calling me the fish man. It was at this time I found the Paul Hahnel Honorary Guppy Society, located in downtown Manhattan, New York City. I was a member for about a year and then a strange thing happened, basketball, track & field and GIRLS. I was cured of this guppy sickness . . . Wrong, years later while I was attending Rochester Institute of Technology in Rochester, New York I passed a pet shop. Yes I spelled it right. I went into this pet shop and you guessed it, there were about 3 tanks of beautiful guppies. For the next two years while at R.I.T. I managed to keep a ten gallon tank of guppies.

In 1977 I would join the South Jersey Guppy Group and until this day I have remained a member. During this time I however became very suicidal together with Fred Salandy and formed a new club, the Big Apple Guppy Group in 1979. Bringing new members into the IFGA guppy hobby for one Warren Burke, Stephen Kwartier and John Eng. Life was truly crazy back in those days. That club went on to win guppy club of the year award (six awards in grand overall). Sorry I have to stop reminiscing "gotta go now", I have to do my water changes on my 25 tanks....

GUPPY FEVER, CATCH IT...

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Filtration



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